Manitoba Firearm Accidents Report

Hunting and Non-Hunting 1986

Hunter and Firearm Safety Program

Manitoba
Natural Resources

87-03636/

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Department of Natural Resources would like to acknowledge the assistance provided by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Municipal Police Forces who provided information for this Firearm Accident Summary. It is through these organizations that detailed information on each firearm accident was obtained.

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Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Municipal Police Forces requiring additional accident report forms please contact us at 1495 St. James Street, or phone 945-6644.

SUMMARY

During the 1986 calendar year there were 32 firearm related accidents. Fifteen of these incidents involved self-inflicted injuries. There were four fatal accidents, three of which involved Treaty Indians in the pursuit of game.

A contributing factor in the deaths of two of the Treaty Indians was that the victims were wearing dark clothing while moose hunting. Investigating officers believed that had they been wearing blaze orange clothing the accidents may have been avoided.

Seventeen of the 32 accidents were not directly related to hunting. However, in 15 incidents the shooter was actively pursuing a game bird or animal. Six were licenced hunters during an open season, five were hunting small game, and the other four were Treaty Indians pursuing game in accordance with their treaty rights.

The vast majority of the accidents (22 of the 32 reported accidents) occurred at a distance of less than 10 yards. Five of the 32 accidents involved graduates of the Hunter Safety program.

The Manitoba Hunter Safety Course was completed by 2,922 students in 1986. Some 100,597 students have now graduated from the program since it began in 1964. The graduation of the 100,000th student was marked by a special ceremony in which the Honourable Leonard Harapiak, Minister of Natural Resources, made a presentation to a 15 year-old Birtle youth and his two instructors. The Hunter Safety Program has largely been successful in minimizing the number of firearm related hunting accidents. Of the 100,597 students who graduated from the program, only 116 have later become involved in accidents.

CAUSE OF ACCIDENTS

	1985	1986
Victim out of sight of shooter.	5	2
Victim moved into line of fire.	1	2
Victim covered by shooter swinging on game.	0	1
Victim mistaken for game.	0	3
Shooter stumbled and fell.	0	3
Using firearm as club.	0	0
Trigger caught on bush or other object.	3	2
Loaded firearm in vehicle.	4	4
Firearm fell from insecure rest.	3	1
"Horseplay" and/or "didn't know it was loaded".	4	2
Crossing fence or other obstacle with loaded firearm.	0	1
Loading.	1	0
Unloading.	1	1
Defective firearm.	2	3
Cleaning Firearm	0	2
Loaded firearm in the home.	2	3
Accidental discharge.	0	0
Ricochet.	0	2
Unknown.	0	0
	26	32

SYNOPSIS OF 1986 FIREARM ACCIDENTS

	1985	1986
Total Number of Accidents	26	32
Fatal	1	4
Non-fatal	25	28
Hunting Legally During Regular Season	7	6
Fatal	1	1
Non-fatal	6	5
Treaty Indian Hunting	4	4
Fatal	0	3
Non-fatal	4	1
Hunting Small Animals, Birds, or Illegally Hunting	1	5
Fatal	0	0
Non-fatal	1	5
Non-hunting Accidents	13	17
Fatal in the home	0	0
Fatal in a vehicle	0	0
Fatal outside home	0	0
Non-fatal in the home	5	9
Non-fatal in a vehicle	1	1
Non-fatal outside the home	7	7
Shooter Unknown	1	0
Fatal	0	0
Non-fatal	1	0
Accidents Involving Shooter 18 years and under	11	11
All Types of Hunting	4	5
Fatal	0	1
Non-fatal	4	4
Non-hunting	7	6
Fatal	0	0
Non-fatal	7	6

TYPE OF FIREARM INVOLVED

	1985	1986
.22 calibre Rim Fire Rifle	11	15
Fatal	0	1
Non-fatal	11	14
Centre Fire Hi Power Rifle	5	8
Fatal	1	3
Non-fatal	4	5
Shotgun	7	6
Fatal	0	0
Non-fatal	7	6
Hand Gun	1	2
Fatal	0	0
Non-fatal	1	2
Pellet Gun	1	1
Fatal	0	0
Non-fatal	1	1
Unknown	1	0
Fatal	0	0
Non-fatal	1	0

DISTANCE OF VICTIM FROM SHOOTER

	1985	1986
0 to 10 yards	19	22
10 to 50 yards	4	5
50 to 100 yards	1	1
over 100 yards	1	3
Distance Unknown	1	1

OCCURRENCES

	1985	1986
Time of Day		
Midnight - 3:00 a.m.	1	3
3:00 a.m. - 6:00 a.m.	0	0
6:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.	2 *	1
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon	2	6 **
12:00 noon - 3:00 p.m.	1	7 *
3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.	9	7 *
6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.	9	5
9:00 p.m. - 12:00 midnight	2	3
Unknown	0	0
By Day		
Sunday	5	4 *
Monday	3 *	5 *
Tuesday	4	5
Wednesday	3	2 *
Thursday	6	4
Friday	2	3 *
Saturday	3	9
By Month		
January	1	2
February	1	1
March	0	3
April	1	3 *
May	1	0
June	2	4
July	0	1
August	3	1
September	5	4
October	7	7 **
November	3 *	4 *
December	2	2

* Indicates one fatal

SUMMARY OF 1986 ACCIDENTS

The following summary of accidents related to the use of firearms serves as a useful lesson for everyone who enjoy shooting sports. Hunter Safety Instructors and their students should make a special effort to study each incident and analyze how the accident occurred. In most cases, one or more of the 10 commandments of Hunter Safety were violated. Don't let you or your friends be the cause of an accident recorded in next year's report.

THE 10 COMMANDMENTS OF HUNTER SAFETY

1. **WATCH THAT MUZZLE! Carry your gun safely; keep safety on until ready to shoot.**

2. **TREAT EVERY GUN WITH THE RESPECT DUE A LOADED GUN.**

3. **UNLOAD GUNS WHEN NOT IN USE, take down or have actions open; guns should be carried in cases to shooting area.**

4. **BE SURE BARREL IS CLEAR OF OBSTRUCTIONS, and that you have ammunition only of the proper size for the gun you carry.**

5. **BE SURE OF TARGET BEFORE YOU PULL TRIGGER; know identifying features of game you hunt.**

6. **NEVER POINT A GUN AT ANYTHING YOU DO NOT WANT TO SHOOT; avoid all horseplay.**

7. **NEVER CLIMB A TREE OR FENCE OR JUMP A DITCH WITH A LOADED GUN; never pull a gun toward you by the muzzle.**

8. **NEVER SHOOT A BULLET AT A FLAT, HARD SURFACE OR WATER; at target practice be sure your backstop is adequate.**

9. **STORE GUNS AND AMMUNITION SEPARATELY, beyond reach of children.**

10. **AVOID ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES before or during shooting.**

DATE & TIME	AGE OF SHOOTER	FATAL OR NON FATAL	SELF-INFLICTED	FIREARM	MUZZLE DISTANCE	GAME HUNTED	HUNTER SAFETY GRADUATE	CIRCUMSTANCES
Saturday Jan 4 3:30 pm	27	Non Fatal	Yes	7.65 mm Handgun	0-10 yds	Non-hunting	No	The victim experienced problems with a faulty mechanism and attempted to correct the problem by cocking the action. His left hand slipped from the handgun during the motion and the handgun discharged. The bullet went through his left hand.
Saturday Jan 18 7:00 pm	22	Non Fatal	Yes	22 cal. rifle	0-10 yds	Non-hunting	No	Victim had taken the firearm out of a shed to target practice. The firearm discharged and the bullet struck the victim in the shoulder.
Wednesday Feb 12 1:00 am	31	Non Fatal	Yes	38 cal. Handgun	0-10 yds	Non-hunting	Yes	The victim was cleaning his handgun. While rotating the cylinder it discharged striking him in the right knee.
Thursday March 27 9:00 am	44	Non Fatal	Yes	22 cal. rifle	0-10 yds	Non-hunting	No	The victim was crawling through a fence and the firearm discharged striking him in the right knee.
Saturday March 29 12:00 pm	19	Non Fatal	No	22 cal. rifle	Unknown	Moose	No	This accident occurred in dense bush. The victim was wearing dark coloured clothing and was out of sight of the shooter. Both hunters had little hunting experience.
Monday March 31 11:18 pm	16	Non Fatal	Yes	.177 cal rifle	0-10 yds	Non-hunting	No	The shooter was horsing around with some friends in the family garage when he discharged the pellet gun at the wall. The pellet ricochetted off the wall striking the shooter in the head.
Friday April 11 9:30 am	16	Fatal	No	22 cal. rifle	0-10 yds	Ducks	No	Two youths were in a canoe checking traps. They observed a duck and attempted to shoot it. The shooter was passing the rifle to the victim when it discharged. The bullet struck the victim in the back and exited from the left chest area.
Friday April 25 12 midnight	17	Non Fatal	Yes	12 ga. shotgun	0-10 yds	Skunk	No	The shooter stopped his vehicle and loaded his shotgun in an attempt to shoot a skunk. While placing the shotgun back into the vehicle he shot himself in the foot.

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Sunday April 27 7:30 am	19	Non Fatal	Yes	22 cal. rifle	0-10 yds	Non-hunting	Yes	While in an intoxicated state the shooter attempted to load his rifle in the living room. The bolt jammed. While holding the rifle between his legs and the barrel pointed over his shoulder he tried to close the bolt. The rifle slipped and discharged striking him in the shoulder.
Saturday June 7 8:00 pm	16	Non Fatal	No	22 cal. rifle	0-10 yds	Non-hunting	No	Accident occurred in a dwelling house. Shooter didn't know the rifle was loaded. He pulled the trigger and the bullet struck the victim on his right hand.
Tuesday June 10 8:30 pm	32	Non Fatal	No	12 ga. shotgun	10-50 yds	Rat	Yes	Victim went to one end of the machine shed to flush a rat for the shooter who was at the other end of the building. Victim took cover behind a pile of boards but was struck in the face and arm by seven pellets which ricochetted off the cement floor.
Thursday June 19 12:25 pm	27	Non Fatal	No	30 cal. M-1 rifle	0-10 yds	Non-hunting	No	Accident occurred on a firing range during target practice. The rifle was defective and the victim received superficial cuts.
Tuesday June 24 5:00 pm	16	Non Fatal	Yes	22 cal. rifle	0-10 yds	Non-hunting	No	The shooter had fired his rifle and it didn't discharge. Believing the firearm was not loaded he was attempting to place it on a wall rack when it discharged. He received a gunshot wound to the stomach.
Tuesday July 1 9:30 pm	14	Non Fatal	No	22 cal. rifle	0-10 yds	Small Birds	No	Shooter was attempting to put the safety on his rifle when the victim stepped in front of the muzzle. The rifle discharged and the bullet struck the victim on the buttocks.

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Tuesday August 26 12:35 pm	33	Non Fatal	Yes	303 cal. rifle	0-10 yds	Non-hunting	No	Victim was carrying his rifle from his home to the garage to clean it. The rifle discharged as he entered the garage, wounding himself in the left foot.
Friday September 12 12:45 pm	21	Non Fatal	Yes	22 cal. rifle	0-10 yds	Non-hunting	No	Victim was cleaning a 22 cal. semi auto rifle in his bedroom. The firearm discharged and the victim received a gun shot wound to the stomach.
Saturday September 13 11:50 pm	28	Non Fatal	Yes	22 cal. rifle	0-10 yds	Non-hunting	No	Victim was unloading his firearm in his home. The firearm discharged striking him in the shoulder.
Monday September 22 8:55 pm	14	Non Fatal	No	30-30 cal. rifle	0-10 yds	Non-hunting	No	Two brothers were in a truck playing with their father's rifle. The rifle discharged and the victim received extensive tissue damage to both thighs.
Monday September 22 4:30 pm	48	Non Fatal	No	300 cal. rifle	100 yds or more	Moose	No	Accident occurred on hydro line. Victim was wearing proper hunting dress, but moved into line of fire. Bullet left a hole in his jacket near his arm.
Wednesday October 1 9:15 am	36	Fatal	No	30-06 cal. rifle	10-50 yds	Moose	No	The victim was shot while standing in some willow bushes by his hunting partner. Victim was wearing green coveralls and parka with a fur lined hood.
Tuesday October 7 10:30 am	44	Non Fatal	No	Shotgun	50-100 yds	Geese	No	The shooter shot at a flying goose in the direction of the victim. The victim who was 75 yds away was struck on the shoulder by a pellet.
Saturday October 11 4:00 pm	42	Non Fatal	Yes	22 cal. rifle	0-10 yds	Grouse	No	The victim was attempting to lean his firearm against a tree when it slipped. He grabbed it near the muzzle and the firearm discharged striking him in the hand.

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Sunday October 12 5:30 pm	26	Fatal	No	30-30 cal. rifle	10-50 yds	Moose	No	This accident occurred on an island where two hunters had observed moose tracks. The victim who was wearing dark clothing was standing on a ridge near the shoreline as the sun was setting. The shooter mistook him for a moose and shot, striking the victim on the left side of the head.
Monday October 13 10:15 am	13	Non Fatal	No	22 cal. rifle	0-10 yds	Non-hunting	No	The shooter was trying to close the action of the rifle when it discharged striking the victim on the left side of the head.
Sunday October 19 12:00 pm	11	Non Fatal	No	22 cal. rifle	10-50 yds	Squirrel	No	Six youths were out squirrel hunting with one firearm. The shooter shot at a squirrel as it was coming down a tree and the bullet hit the victim who was standing on the other side of the tree in the arm.
Saturday October 25 10:30 am	31	Non Fatal	No	410 shotgun	10-50 yds	Grouse	Yes	The shooter shot at a grouse and 3 pellets from his shot struck the victim in the chest, but didn't break the skin. The victim was out of sight of the shooter.
Saturday November 1 5:00 pm	16	Non Fatal	Yes	12 ga. shotgun	0-10 yds	Non-hunting	No	Victim was out target shooting and fell with a loaded firearm. The firearm discharged and the pellets struck him in the foot.
Tuesday November 18 5:25 pm	32	Non Fatal	No	300 cal. rifle	100 or more yds	Deer	No	The shooter was going out to meet the victim who was deer hunting. It was almost dark and he mistook the victim for a deer and shot him in the leg.
Sunday November 23 3:30 pm	15	Non Fatal	No	22 cal. rifle	100 or more yds	Ptarmigan	No	Two youths were pursuing a ptarmigan on foot. The shooter stopped to tie his shoe and the victim continued the pursuit. The shooter resumed the chase and stumbled and fell resulting in the firearm discharging. The victim was struck by a bullet in the thigh.

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Monday November 24 10:30 - 2:30 pm	19	Fatal	Yes	High Power rifle	0-10 yds	Deer	Yes	Victim apparently was climbing or descending from a tree when his rifle discharged resulting in a fatal wound.
Thursday December 4 12:00 pm	19	Non Fatal	Yes	22 cal. rifle	0-10 yds	Non-hunting	No	Victim stumbled and fell in his home while carrying a loaded firearm. He was struck by the bullet in the leg.
Thursday December 18 01:43 am	23	Non Fatal	No	410 shotgun	0-10 yds	Non-hunting	No	The victim was carrying a loaded firearm in his vehicle. The shooter picked it up and it discharged into the victim's right knee.